



Center for Educational Performance and Information

Overview of Michigan's 2004-2005 Graduation and Dropout Methodology

Over the past year, several events have impacted the 2004-2005 graduation and dropout rate calculation process, including the following:

1. The State School Aid Act was signed into law in September of 2005 and directed the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) to determine the graduation and dropout rates pursuant to national standards. To comply with the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), the law no longer excludes migrant and alternative education students.
2. The National Governors Association's (NGA) recommended methodology was identified as the national standard by Governor Granholm, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), and the Department of Management and Budget (DMB).

As a result of these events, Michigan will begin transitioning from using aggregate data to determine the graduation and dropout rates to determining the rates based on a four-year student cohort, as the NGA methodology prescribes. More information on the NGA methodology is available via the NGA Web site: <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507GRAD.PDF>.

In previous years, the final data for determining the graduation and dropout rates were obtained from school districts through the Web-based Education Data Network (EDN). The appropriate student data from the Single Record Student Database (SRSD) submissions were pre-populated into the EDN for any necessary editing by the school districts. For the 2004-2005 rates, a Web-based Graduation/Dropout Review and Comment Application will be available in late spring for districts and schools/facilities to review their 2004-2005 calculated rates and adjust the results based on their most recent knowledge of the students' movements.

Until the cohort methodology is finalized, the formula for determining the 2004-2005 graduation and dropout rates will be the same as that used for determining the 2003-2004 rates, which takes into account student attrition in a high school over a multiple-year period. The difference between the methodology for the 2004-2005 rates and that of previous years will be in the way that the enrollments and transfers are determined.

The 2004-2005 graduation and dropout rates will examine each student's movement from fall 2004 to, and including, fall 2005, in order to determine his or her disposition for the school year. As the students move through the educational system, they will be placed into one of the following categories: continuing with his/her education; transferred in; transferred out; a high school completer; a high school graduate; retained in grade; or unknown (dropout). Migrant and alternative education students will now be included in the calculations.